

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

10-20-09

1.1 COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

PURPOSE OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

The purpose for the 2008 Comprehensive Plan update is to address the amended Metropolitan Land Planning Act of 1995, which requires the decennial review of local plans in the metropolitan area to ensure conformity with all regional system plans, and for consistency between the plan and the community's own ordinances, fiscal devices and other local implementation procedures.

A majority of Eden Prairie's land area is located in the urban policy area of the Metropolitan Council's Regional Growth Management Plan. This area is defined as that part of the region actively becoming urbanized and within which local and regional services are committed during specified time periods. Within this policy area, the Metropolitan Council calls for communities to strive to develop land as efficiently as possible, both through redevelopment and in the development of the remaining vacant land.

A very small portion of the City, located at its southern edge outside of the Metropolitan Urban Service Area (MUSA) line, lies within the urban reserve policy area. This area is defined as the rural-to-urban transition area between the current line and the urban reserve boundary line, which is being held in a rural condition until such time as it is included in the urban area.

LOCATION

The City of Eden Prairie is a suburban community located in the southwest corner of Hennepin County, approximately 18

miles from downtown Minneapolis and 20 miles from downtown St. Paul. Eden Prairie contains 36 square miles in size and is situated in a setting of rolling hills, lakes and creeks. The City integrated community growth with the natural resources including the Minnesota River bluffs, woodlands, lakes, creeks, wetlands and varied topography.

TRANSPORTATION

Eden Prairie has a comprehensive system of highways including Interstate 494, US Highway 5, US Highway 312, US Highway 212, US Highway 169, and many other County Highway and local collector roads. Bus transit service is available through the Southwest Metro Transit Commission. The headquarters for Southwest Metro Transit is located at the intersections of Technology Drive and Prairie Center Drive, with scheduled service for downtown commuters available at this hub. A 900 space park and ride facility is co-located with Southwest Metro Transit's headquarters. The Flying Cloud Airport, located in south central Eden Prairie, is a metropolitan reliever airport.

Transportation has always been a priority and the City has actively worked with regional agencies to construct regional systems accordingly with its growth. Central to this topic is the availability of corridors to carry motorists to, from and through the community. However, since the last comprehensive plan update was completed in 2000, there has been significant population growth in the communities located south and west of Eden Prairie, which continues to place pressure in the form of increasing congestion on regional transportation systems that are found within Eden Prairie. The presence of

natural environmental constraints, such as wetlands, lakes and designated open spaces has also limited the feasibility of some transportation corridors, affecting the existing corridors' capacity to accommodate increasing traffic volumes. Therefore, transportation improvements have focused on expanding and enhancing the safety and capacity of existing roadways. Eden Prairie has worked closely with Hennepin County and the Minnesota Department of Transportation to plan for construction of necessary improvements to the roadway system.

Additional detailed information and analysis of Eden Prairie's transportation system and planning can be found in the Transportation Element in Chapter 5.

NATURAL FEATURES, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Eden Prairie has rolling topography with extensive tree cover, wetlands, 15 lakes and three creeks. The vegetation of the City is as varied as its topography, encompassing everything from grass and prairie lands to hardwood forests, wetland meadows and marsh grasses. This spectrum of vegetation provides the habitat for a wide variety of wildlife. The City contains 15 lakes and approximately 487 wetlands (measuring just over 3,670 acres).

There are approximately 10,800 acres of publicly owned land in the City, including over 5,000 acres that comprise an extensive system of public parks and open space, with rolling wooded, and scenic terrain acquired for park and open space purposes. This includes City, County, and Regional parks and open spaces, river bluffs, creek corridors, lakes, creeks and wetlands. The City also owns and operates a Community Center, Senior Center, Outdoor Center and

Amphitheater. In cooperation with the Eden Prairie School District, the City offers a wide variety of recreation programs and activities.

Additional detailed information on Eden Prairie's community facilities can be found in the Community Facilities Element in Chapter 7.

CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL FEATURES

There are historical, cultural and archeological properties in the City. In 1990, the City adopted an ordinance to enhance the City's role in the preservation and protection of these resources.

Since that time, a citizen Heritage Preservation Commission conducted cultural resource surveys, recommended properties for historic site designation, performed design review in relation to registered properties and sponsored a range of public education activities. The Commission also oversees the Heritage Site Recognition Program, a voluntary program that recognizes the historically significant buildings and places within Eden Prairie. There are currently seven properties in the City designated as preservation sites.

Additional detailed information and analysis of the City's historic and cultural resources can be found in the Land Use Element in Chapter 3.

PUBLIC SERVICES

Eden Prairie operates under the "Statutory Plan B" form of government, with a City Council-City Manager form of government. The City Council consists of a mayor and four council members. The City Manager is the chief administrative officer of the Staff. The City Council appoints advisory

commissions and boards, including the Planning Commission; Board of Review; Human Rights and Diversity Commission; Flying Cloud Airport Advisory Commission; Heritage Preservation Commission; Budget Advisory Commission; Conservation Commission; Hennepin South Human Services Collaborative; Southwest Metro Transit Commission; and Park and Recreation Commission.

City Hall, the Police Department and Fire Station #1 are all located at the Eden Prairie City Center. There are also three other Fire Stations located throughout the City. The Water Treatment Plant, Public Utility operations, and Public Maintenance building are located in separate buildings on Technology Drive. The Senior Center is located off County Road 4, south of Highway 5 while the Community Center is located near the high school off Valley View Road.

Most of the City is served by Eden Prairie School District #272. The Minnetonka and Hopkins School Districts serve small portions of the City's northwest and northeast corners, respectively.

The Eden Prairie School District is currently experiencing stable enrollment, with a total of 9,955 students enrolled during the 2006-2007 school year. The International School of Minnesota (private), and the Hennepin Technical College are located in the City.

The City strives to meet the human needs of its residents by offering a variety of civic involvement, volunteer opportunities and social/human resources and services. Civic organizations in the City include Rotary Club, Lions Club, Lioness Club, Women of Today, Eden Prairie Foundation, League of Women Voters, Eden Prairie Women's

Network, Senior Citizen's Pioneer Club and School Boosters. The City also is home to approximately twenty places of worship.

The City contracts with over fifteen agencies to provide human services to its residents including counseling, prevention and intervention efforts for troubled youth, senior and family counseling services, senior home repair services, tenant advocacy service, , , Meals on Wheels, and several other programs. The City is served by several medical and health facilities both within the City and in neighboring communities. The City Center is also home to People Reaching Other People (PROP,) a food shelf and emergency service provider.

Additional detailed information on Eden Prairie's community facilities can be found in the Community Facilities Element in Chapter 7.

1.2 COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

In order to predict and plan for the future demand for both residential and non-residential development in the City, and prepare a future land use plan, it is important to understand the historic trends and forecasted changes in Eden Prairie's demographic composition. This section will report such trends and forecasts based on information prepared by the City, the US Census, the Metropolitan Council, the Minnesota State Demographic Center, the Minnesota Department of Economic Security, and other sources.

POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

Prior to 1970, Eden Prairie could be described as a small farming village of fewer than 5,000 people. Its few residential

neighborhoods were widely dispersed around a 36 square mile area. Growth began to change the rural landscape significantly in the 1970's. By the 1980 Census, population had grown to 16,263.

The City of Eden Prairie was Minnesota's fastest growing city from 1980 to 1990, with a 142 percent increase in the population over that time. The 2000 population according to US Census data was 54,981. At that time, Eden Prairie City Staff estimated a population of 54,438 residents as of December 31, 1999.

Table 1.1 shows that by 2030, the City expects to achieve a population of 77,124 Metropolitan Council population forecasts for the City through 2030 reflect the "low" projections of the City and are shown in Table 1.2.

Given the trend of steady population growth over the past 20 years, the City anticipates participating in this growth trend by accommodating smaller households at specific locations such as the Major Center Area as well as traditional family households in existing residential

neighborhoods. With this strategy in hand, City staff estimate that its population will reach full development within the next twenty-year period. Figure 1.1 illustrates the actual and the City's forecasted trend in population growth.

Table 1.1
City of Eden Prairie Population Projections, 2010-2030

Year	Forecast
2010	65,000
2020	69,900
2030	77,124

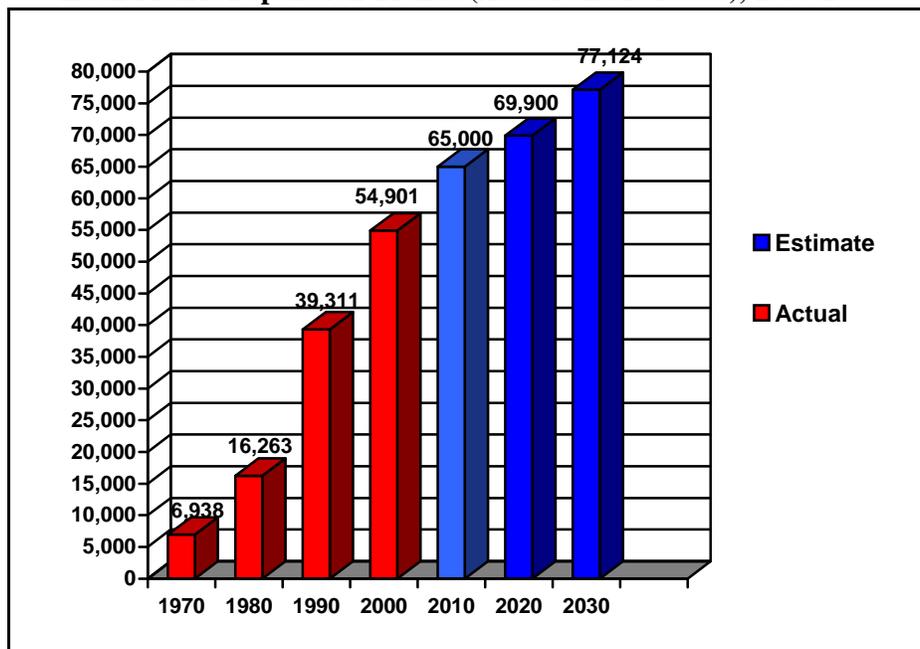
Source: City of Eden Prairie, 2008

Table 1.2
Metropolitan Council Population Projections for the City of Eden Prairie, 2010-2030

Year	Forecast
2010	61,200
2020	62,500
2030	63,000

Source: Metropolitan Council, 2005

Figure 1.1
Eden Prairie Population Trends (Actual and Forecast), 1970-2030



Source: US Census, 1970-2000; City of Eden Prairie, 2006

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

According to the 1970 US Census, there were only 1,653 households in the City. Ten years later, at the time of the 1980 Census, there were 5,383 households in the City. The highest growth rate in the City's history occurred between 1985 and 1988, when about 1,400 residential permits were issued annually. However, starting in 1989, a slumping national economy and lingering recession caused a dramatic downturn in housing over the next two years.

In 1990, the US Census reported 15,000 households in the City. By late 1991, the housing market began to slowly improve,

which led to an 18 percent increase in building permits issued between 1990 and 1991, and 55 percent increase from 1991 to 1992. As the recession of the early 1990s faded, a significant drop in interest rates on home mortgages caused an upsurge in new housing construction in 1993.

The City's growth (determined by the number of new residential building permits issued) has slowed since 1996, indicative of less appropriate or desirable vacant land available for new development. The residential building permit issuance rate is shown in Table 1.3. The trend in the housing growth in the last 23 years is illustrated in Figure 1.2.

Table 1.3
Residential Building Permit Issuance, 1990-2005

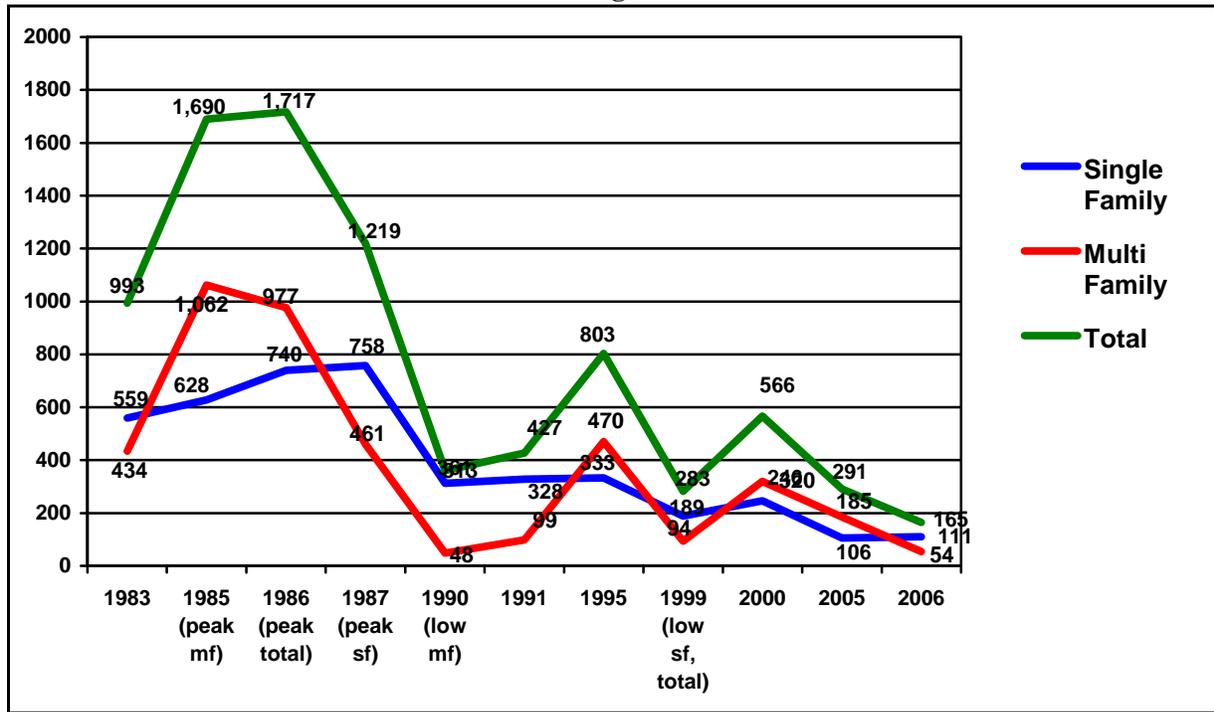
Year	Single Family	Multiple Family	Total	Change from Previous Year
1990	313	48	361	-37.3%
1991	328	99	427	18.3%
1992	476	154	630	47.5%
1993	512	154	666	5.7%
1994	461	319	780	17.0%
1995	333	470	803	29.4%
1996	271	430	701	-14.5%
1997	212	388	600	-14.4%
1998	208	167	375	-37.5%
1999	189	94	283	<u>24.6%</u>
2000	264	317	581	48.7%
2001	237	128	365	-37.2%
2002	240	842	1082	196.0%
2003	211	486	687	-36.5%
2004	136	227	363	-47.2%
2005	106	185	291	-19.8%
Total	4497	4508	9905	<i>n/a</i>

Source: City of Eden Prairie Dept. of Community Development, 2005

Based on City forecasts through the year 2030, the overall number of households will increase through 2010, but then level off at approximately 33,067 as the City reaches full development, as shown in Table 1.4

The Metropolitan Council housing forecasts for the next two decades are shown in Table 1.5, predicting a somewhat more gradual increase, approaching 26,500 by 2030.

**Figure 1.2
Residential Building Trends 1983-2006**



Source: City of Eden Prairie Dept. of Community Development, 2006

**Table 1.4
City of Eden Prairie's
Households Forecasts, 2010-2030**

Year	Forecast
2010	25,000
2020	28,500
2030	32,961

Source: City of Eden Prairie, 2007

**Table 1.5
Metropolitan Council Households Forecasts
for the City of Eden Prairie, 2010-2030**

Year	Forecast
2010	24,200
2020	25,500
2030	26,500

Source: Metropolitan Council

For housing purposes, the Metropolitan Council makes certain generalizations about each age group. Usually, people between the ages of 0 and 19 are students living with their parents. Those between the ages of 20 and 24 are often renters and do not become first-time homebuyers until they reach between the ages of 25 and 34. People 35 to 49 years of age often can afford to buy a larger home with more amenities referred to as “move-up” housing. Empty nesters are usually between the ages of 50 and 64, and many of them choose to move to smaller housing as do young seniors between the ages of 65 and 74. Older seniors may begin

to require assisted-living housing.

As shown in Table 1.6, the three largest householder categories in Eden Prairie comprised the 0-19, 25-34 and 35-49 population groups. In other words, the predominant household type in the City was young families with school-aged children

Persons age 50 and older will continue to grow as the baby boomer population reaches retirement age. Additionally, the average household size in Eden Prairie has been getting slightly smaller over the past two decades, as shown in Table 1.7. Older

householders create additional demand for smaller housing, rental units, and assisted living quarters. They may also desire transit

service and/or housing in close proximity to commercial services.

Table 1.6
Household Population by Current Age of Householder, 2000

Ages	Population	Percent (Grouping)
0-19	17,749	32.3% (Generally students living with parents)
20-24	2,375	4.3% (Generally renters)
25-34	8,023	14.6% (Typical first-time home buyer group)
35-54	20,361	37% (Move-up home buyer market)
55-64	3,716	6.7% (Empty nesters, may move to smaller homes or attached housing)
65-74	1,649	3% (Young seniors, variety of housing options)
75+	1,028	1.9% (Older seniors, often needing various services and housing options)
Totals	54,901	100%

Source: US Census, 2000

Table 1.7
Average Household size, 1990-2000

Year	Average household size
1990	2.71
2000	2.68

Source: US Census 1990 and 2000;

Eden Prairie has a long history of supporting “life cycle housing”, or housing for people through all stages of life. Providing this wide mix of housing helps meet the changing needs of the community throughout the lifetime of its residents. A variety of housing has been available to accommodate a wide range of incomes and

lifestyles. Apartments, town homes, condominiums, senior housing facilities and a full range of single family homes will continue to assure ample housing choices. Analysis of how Eden Prairie’s housing stock may be affected by anticipated household growth is found in Chapter 4, Housing.

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

The City has a broad business and industry base, and serves as home to high tech, growth and Fortune 500 companies.

Because of the City’s strategic location and availability of land, hundreds of new companies have moved into Eden Prairie. Table 1.8 compares Eden Prairie’s employment to other communities.

The City estimates that employment should hit approximately 71,000 at full development. The Metropolitan Council employment forecasts for jobs in the City

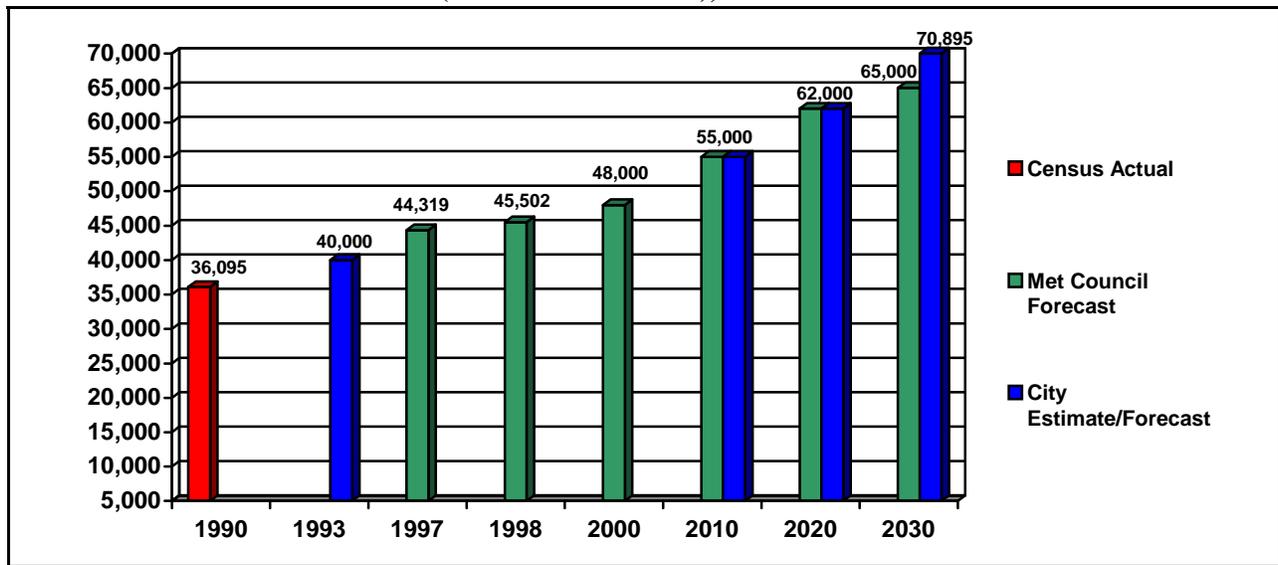
through 2020 are somewhat lower, however, as shown in Table 1.9. The actual and forecasted trend in the City’s job growth is illustrated in Figure 1.3.

Table 1.8
Cities with More than 35,000 Jobs, 2000-2004

City	2000	2004	Change
Minneapolis	308,127 (1)	286,235 (1)	-7.1% (7)
St. Paul	188,124 (2)	180,315 (2)	-4.2% (3)
Bloomington	104,548 (3)	92,427 (3)	-11.6% (10)
Plymouth	53,491 (4)	50,115 (4)	-6.3% (6)
Edina	52,2991 (5)	50,066 (5)	-5.5% (5)
Minnetonka	51,276 (6)	46,287 (8)	-9.7% (9)
Eden Prairie	51,006 (7)	46,751 (7)	-8.3% (8)
Eagan	42,750 (8)	48,804 (6)	14.2% (1)
St. Louis Park	40,696 (9)	38,675 (9)	-5.0% (4)
Roseville	39,211 (10)	38,153 (10)	-2.7% (2)

Source: Minnesota Department of Economic Security and Metropolitan Council, 2004

Figure 1.3
Eden Prairie Employment Trends
(Actual and Forecast), 1970-2030



Source: US Census, 1990-2000; Metropolitan Council, 2005; City of Eden Prairie, 2005

**Table 1.9
Metropolitan Council Employment
Forecasts for the City of Eden Prairie,
2010-2030**

Year	Forecast
2010	55,000
2020	62,000
2030	65,500

Source: Metropolitan Council, 2005

According to the 2000 US Census, there were a total of 31,575 persons in Eden Prairie age 16 and over that comprise the labor force. Almost 98% of the eligible labor force, or 30,916 individuals, were employed.

The City will be examining ways to encourage redevelopment that integrate living and working environments, including possible residential or mixed use PUDs

providing access to both jobs and services in the Major Center Area and Golden Triangle.

The rate of job growth in Eden Prairie is projected to be rather consistent with that of Suburban Hennepin County and the Metropolitan Area, with the exception of the forecast for this past decade, as shown in Table 1.10.

From 2000-2010, Eden Prairie is estimated to have seen a rate of job growth that is about 2.8 times lower than Suburban Hennepin County and the Metropolitan Area.

From 2010-2020, Eden Prairie is forecasted to have a slightly greater rate of job growth in comparison to the surrounding area.

**Table 1.10
Comparative Employment Forecasts Between Eden Prairie,
Suburban Hennepin County and the Metropolitan Area, 2000-2030**

	2000	2010	2020	2030	% Change 2000- 2010	% Change 2010- 2020	% Change 2020- 2030
Eden Prairie	51,006	55,000	62,000	65,000	7.83%	12.72%	4.83%
Suburban Hennepin County	826,340	914,890	983,610	1,040,230	10.71%	7.51%	5.76%
Metropolitan Area	1,606,263	1,817,800	1,999,800	2,144,400	13.16%	10.68%	7.23%

Source: Metropolitan Council, 2007

COMMERCIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

Due to its strategic location in the southwest quadrant of the Metropolitan Area, Eden Prairie has attracted major office, commercial, industrial and high-tech

businesses. The amount of commercial, office, industrial and public square footage increased from 1,916,000 sq. ft. to 26,263,069 sq. ft. between 1980 and 2005. The growth space of these land uses over the past five years (between 2000 and 2005) is shown in Table 1.11.

Table 1.11
Business Space, 2000-2006

Building Type	2000 Square Footage	2006 Square Footage	Percent Increase 2000-2006
Commercial	4,212,306	5,043,635	16.5%
Office	4,249,260	4,717,653	10%
Industrial	12,555,996	12,867,939	2.5%
Public	2,909,078	3,535,160	18%
Total	23,926,640	26,164,387	8.6%

Source: City of Eden Prairie, 2006

As the community evolved into a mix of land uses, light industrial and commercial office uses clustered in the Golden Triangle area, bounded by highways 169, 212 and Interstate 494. This area developed as a low intensity, job-focused district since its inception, and over time there has been some conversion to more intense office uses. This has caused some concerns about traffic congestion and access points to and from the larger district, as the current demands exceed the original plans and parameters used to build out the Golden Triangle Area.

The 2008 Comp Plan update describes a more diverse land use future for this former industrial and commercial area, based on the future presence of Light Rail Transit. Approved land use concepts call for a combination of residential, employment, open space and support commercial goods and services clustered within ¼ mile of a proposed LRT- Golden Triangle station. Additional details of the Golden Triangle land use concept are found in Chapter 3, Land Use.

Eden Prairie's downtown area, the Major Center Area, is located generally around the

interchange of I-494 and US Highways 169 and 212. The anchor of downtown has been the Eden Prairie Center. Though the Major Center Area has been identified as a community downtown, recent area planning completed in January of 2006 specifically targeted public improvements and desired development patterns that would create a compact, walkable, mixed use core area south of Technology Drive and west of Highway 212, known as the Major Center Area Town Center. Building on past efforts to call out this area with common architectural themes and design elements unique to Eden Prairie, the plan identified specific land use, densities and changes to the street and bicycle/pedestrian network needed to ensure the Town Center evolves into a pedestrian-friendly residential neighborhood, supported by service and shopping functions and welcoming to all Eden Prairie residents as their 'downtown' destination.

Additional detailed information and analysis of Eden Prairie's commercial characteristics and the Major Center Area's Town Center can be found in the Land Use Element in Chapter 3.

Sources:

City of Eden Prairie, Annual Report, 2006

City of Eden Prairie, Community Development Recorder, January 2007

Metropolitan Council, Residential Building Permits Issued in The Twin Cities Area January-March 2000, Publication No. 74-00-025, May 2000

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